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ABSTRACT

The information packet contains six abridged readings on career education programs for educable mentally retarded (EMR) adolescents and young adults. A driver training program is discussed which serves special needs of EMR students and is based on the premise that travel independence provides more vocational opportunity. A guidebook presents facts about EMR persons for employers, personnel directors, and vocational rehabilitation people. Recommended for teachers is use of the sociodrama in high school training programs to enable EMR students to acquire social concepts and skills for later job adjustment. Described for teachers of EMR students are special needs of students, available opportunities in the health service industry, and teaching methods that may resolve training problems. It is recommended that high school work study programs provide a center for each type of training and combine academic knowledge with skill training. Cooperation between vocational and special education teachers is sought for a new job cluster program for handicapped persons. (MC)

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INFO - PAK 2

SELECTED READINGS

CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FOR EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED

A Group of Abridged Reading Selections
From a Selected Topic Area

EC 060 297

USOE/MSU
REGIONAL
INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS
CENTER FOR
HANDICAPPED
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AND YOUTH

413 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48824
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INFO - PAK #2

SELECTED READINGS

CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FOR EDUCABLE MENTALLY RETARDED

CONTENTS

1 Smith, John K. "Safety Training Using Driver Education Non-Traditional System," Project S.t.u.d.e.n.t.s. Dayton, Ohio: Montgomery Public Schools, August, 1969, pp.6-7; 11-12.

Driver training adapted for educable retarded students is discussed in this report. The program incorporates the special needs of EMR students. The basis of the program is that through greater travel independence, the EMR student will be provided more vocational opportunity.

2 The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. Guide to Job Placement of the Mentally Retarded. pp.4-6; 9-10.

This Guidebook presents facts about the mentally retarded and their ability to function in work situations. It is aimed at employers, personnel directors, vocational rehabilitation people, placement specialists, etc., acquainting these people with a variety of job placements that can be given by the employer to develop desired performance of the retarded individual.

3 Blackhurst, A. Edward. "Sociodrama for the Adolescent Mentally Retarded," Training School Bulletin, 1966. pp. 136-142.

This article discusses the problem of adjustment of Mentally Retarded workers. To facilitate the acquisition of social concepts and skills the article proposes that teachers use sociodrama in occupational training programs for the Adolescent Mentally Retarded.

4 Baxter, Jan. "Understanding and Developing Vocational Needs of the Mentally Retarded," Health Occupations for the Handicapped. Lansing, Michigan: Michigan Department of Education, 1971, pp. 16-19.

This article is from a pamphlet acquainting teachers of Educable Mentally Retarded students with the variety of vocational opportunities for their students in the Health Service Industry. Specifically, the article describes the relationship between the special needs of the student and the available opportunities. In addition, teaching methods are examined that may help resolve some of the training problems.

5 Campbell, L. Wayne; Medford, Todd; O'Rourke, Everett V. "Job-Simulation Centers and Areas of Skill Training," Work-Study Handbook for Educable Mentally Retarded Minors Enrolled in High School Programs in California Public Schools. Sacramento, Calif.: State Board of Education, 1971, pp. 37-41.

This article is a selection from a work-study program that explains how educational-vocational programs for Mentally Retarded students at the High School level can be planned. The article suggests a center for each type of training with the component tasks necessary for a given job in each area. It also emphasizes the combining of academic knowledge with skill training, and the students' real need to develop emotional stability and self-confidence.

6 Reynolds, M. Leroy. "Questions That May Be Asked," A Project to Train Vocational Education and Special Education Teachers to Work Cooperatively in Occupational Preparation of Handicapped Persons. Lansing, Michigan: Michigan Department of Education, 1972, pp. 1-5.

A question and answer format is used in this article to promote cooperation between vocational and special education teachers. A new cluster program for handicapped persons, available in 1974, is also briefly explained.

7 Fraenkel, William A. How To Get A Job. Washington, D.C.: The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, 1967.

This booklet is not included in this material, but it is an excellent handbook for use by the Educable Retarded. It gives the EMR individual well organized ideas for planning their job-hunting process. The handbook can be obtained FREE from the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, Washington, D.C.

Smith, John K. "Safety Training Using Driver Education Non-Traditional System," Project S.T.U.D.E.N.T.S.

SAFETY TRAINING USING DRIVER EDUCATION NON-TRADITIONAL SYSTEM

At the beginning of the Non-Traditional Driver Education Program, the Educable Mentally Retarded students were given pre-tests to determine their knowledge of safety, their self-concept as a learner, and their self-concept as a worker. These tests were given not only to determine if the students' knowledge of driving could improve, but also to help determine if a successful experience in driver education could strengthen other self-concepts. (Please refer to Appendix A for tests given.) The pre-and post-tests which determined the participants' self-concept knowledge of safety were used to acquire background data.

The safety education test was used to aid the consultants in establishing a starting point for the academic work. This test also provided the students with an insight into some of the studies that would be included in the program.

The usual opportunity for these handicapped students to obtain a driver's license through either a regular driver training class or self-study is an almost impossible task due to a variety of handicaps including physical, limited mental capacity and minimal reading ability. Therefore, it is easy to understand why handicapped students have a difficult time securing a temporary permit under existing conditions. The non-traditional driver education program prepares the participants and greatly facilitates the passage of the permit requirements.

When adequate student information had been compiled, the curriculum was then focused on the proper level to meet the needs of those concerned.

It is interesting to find that the students feel that if they learn to drive, the chances are greater that they can be employed.

In addition to not having an opportunity to drive, these students never had an opportunity to work. To the EMR students, driving and working are two goals of utmost importance. With these factors in mind, it would seem that motivation would naturally run high. However, this is not the case since many other factors stand out as barriers to hinder motivation.

Some additional factors were:

1. The classes were held after school. This taxed the endurance of the students.
2. The EMR student generally has a short attention span and by the time the regular school day ends, he is ready to put aside the learning processes until another day.
3. Classes were held for two hours during the Spring, a time when almost everyone desires to be out of doors.
4. Parents indicated that it was inconvienent to provide participant transportation while their child finished the after-school classroom phase.

Results found by the Montgomery County Board of Education in a concurrent post follow-up study of students with EMR characteristics, show that 54.3% (222 of 405) subjects interviewed hold a valid driver's license. Of the above total, 19.7% (57) have completed traditional driver education training; 53.6% (213) were enrolled in a work study oriented curriculum; and 57% (121) of those post graduate students hold a valid driver's license. Thus it can be assumed that handicapped students will drive regardless of the availability of driver education in school.

the actual ability of the students determined the amount of each type of learning situation that was used in order to provide the greatest amount of learning possible. Students with average or high I.Q.'s can usually grasp abstract ideas with little difficulty while students with less ability need concrete and semi-concrete learning situations before actual learning can occur with retention. In many instances abstract learning situations or ideas were coupled with either concrete or semi-concrete learning situations, or both, in order to reinforce the ideas which were taught.

The basic information needed to teach this program, like any other program, came from printed material. The difference, however, was in the instructional method which used available concrete and semi-concrete learning situations to support the abstract printed material. Concepts from various abstract printed materials were re-written with an adjusted vocabulary. These were presented to the students in lessons centered around a single idea which was not difficult for the students to comprehend.

Since the students had no driving experience, they had not formed a definite attitude toward driving. Attitude, therefore, was the initial point of instruction. In teaching lessons aimed at developing attitude, vocabulary has to be adjusted so that the students can achieve maximum understanding. For example, if the instructor were teaching the concept that "Courtesy is Contagious" for the purpose of building a good driving attitude, he would substitute another word for "contagious" such as "catching". In cases where simple synonyms were lacking, two or more words were needed to build understanding. For instance, if the word "strive" were to appear, "work hard" would be a more meaningful substitute. Using a working vocabulary which was within the reach of the educable retarded student played an integral part in developing a good driving attitude.

After the initial instruction dealing with building a positive attitude, the selected curriculum involved the practical application of rules and laws in driving techniques that were considered most beneficial to the student. Because the students in this program were limited in their reading abilities, and because their working vocabulary was inadequate, it was difficult for them to read and understand motor vehicle laws. Total comprehension of these laws is necessary to acquire a tempory driving permit. Meaningful presentation of the motor vehicle laws by simplified verbal and visual means constituted the major emphasis on the academic teaching level. The objective for the project was for the students to be able to directly apply these newly learned laws to driving situations.

After the vocabulary was adjusted for presentation, concrete and semi-concrete learning situations were injected into the curriculum to strengthen understanding. A set of transparencies was made and was correlated exclusively with small, single concept, printed lessons used for instruction.

In teaching right-of-way rules, often a confusing concept, transparencies were used effectively. After listing the right-of-way rules on the board and discussing them thoroughly, the students still expressed doubts about just how these rules applied to actual driving. At this time a transparency simulating an intersection was placed on the overhead projector and projected on the screen. Each of the four students were permitted to place a transparent car on one of the transparent intersections. After the students had placed their vehicles on the transparency and created a right-of-way situation, they employed the right-of-way rules to solve the dilemma. The students actually moved the vehicles through the simulated intersection in accordance with the right-of-way rules. With the use of these teaching aids, all of the students could see the practical application of the right-of-way rules.

Another meaningful teaching and learning situation enhanced through the use of transparencies was in the study of signs. In this instance, the students received basic instructions about signs. By using the transparency, all students were at the same place at the same time; therefore, they could help each other when the situation called for it.

Films were another instance of semi-concrete teaching aids used to implement the non-traditional curriculum. Films were used as a teaching aid to add change of pace as well as depth to the instructional procedure during long periods of instruction. Although there are many informative films, not all are appropriate for Educable Mentally Retarded students. Films presented in story form or having human interest appeal seemed to have the most learning potential for the students. This observation can be verified by the known fact that EMR students have short attention spans and need high interest level materials to be motivated. The films were always re-run so the students could enjoy the story the first time and then look for important information and concepts, as pointed out by the instructor during the second showing.

Concrete learning situations were also attempted. Since all instruction was centered around the automobile, it seemed mandatory to inspect the essential parts of the automobile and explain the functions of each of these parts. An inspection list was compiled and given to the students. The students, with the aid of the instructor, were to find and identify on a model car each item listed and then explain its function. The following inspection list was used:

1. Headlights
2. Turn signals
3. Tires
4. Horn
5. Safety belts
6. Brake pedal
7. Master cylinder
8. Glass
9. Rear view mirror
11. Outside mirrors
12. Exhaust system
13. License plate
14. License plate light
15. Brake lights
16. Back up lights
17. Parking brake
18. Gear lever indicator
19. Windshield wipers
21. Dimmer switch
22. Seat adjustment lever
23. Dip stick
24. Radiator
25. Gas gauge
26. Oil light
27. Generator light
28. Parking brake light
29. Clutch pedal (optional)

Through the combined efforts of the National Association for Retarded Children, professional groups, and countless public and other voluntary agencies, considerable emphasis has been focused on the abilities of the retarded, rather than on their disabilities. Greater numbers of retarded children are being properly diagnosed earlier in life. More home training, family counseling, and preschool, school, recreation, and religious education programs are preparing retarded youngsters for employment.

Satisfied employers who have hired the retarded know that what a man cannot do is not as important as what he is capable of doing. As a result of this positive approach, a better informed public is coming to realize that among the retarded, as among all other handicapped persons, it is ability that counts—not disability.

Obviously, not all the needs of the mentally retarded are being met. Far from it. Yet advances have been made in the proper direction, and every day brings more progress.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

Increasingly, employers are coming to realize the advantages of hiring properly trained and qualified mentally retarded workers. With proper placement, the disability of retardation can cease to be a job disability.

The trained mentally retarded worker often can make a greater contribution to his employer than the individual who may not be retarded but who brings no particular skills and no particular abilities. The key, of course, is proper placement—the right man in the right job.

"Mental retardation" by no means implies a total absence of skills and aptitudes. Only a person's intellectual capacity is retarded—not necessarily the rest of him. Some studies have shown mentally retarded persons with high degrees of clerical aptitude, mechanical aptitude, dexterity, and other types of skills. Proper placement can play up the skills and play down the retardation.

There also is a dollars-and-cents advantage to hiring the qualified mentally retarded. Like the physically handicapped, the mentally retarded, when placed on the right job, will return $10 in income taxes for every $1 spent on their rehabilitation.

The mentally retarded come from all walks of life. Some are born to brilliant parents, some to average, some to less than average. Retardation knows no bounds.

In most cases, the retarded person referred or identified through a rehabilitation agency comes from a home where retardation is understood and every effort is made to encourage training. The prospective employer considering such a person for a job can be sure he won't be getting just another "unknown" walking in from off the streets.

This single fact can assume major proportions when employment specialists search for the stable worker, for the "right" man or woman for the job, for the person who will stay and will not hop from job to job, for the person who already has had a great deal of training for employment. In short, qualified mentally retarded workers can be better employment risks than many other workers with unstable job histories and poor work habits or who lack training.

The mentally retarded worker has pride in his work. Mainly, the kinds of jobs the mentally retarded can perform are unskilled, service, or short-cycle repetitive tasks. Other workers would be bored by them, but not the mentally retarded. The retarded worker seeks these jobs. He actually is better qualified for them than most others. Therefore, the employer can expect from him enthusiasm and a high degree of job interest and satisfaction.

Job satisfaction, job fulfillment, job accomplishment—these are the reactions and intangible rewards that most employment interviewers look for to differentiate the stable worker from the drifter. These reactions reflect the characteristics that the mentally retarded bring to their jobs.

In occupations ordinarily showing a high degree of turnover, qualified mentally retarded workers tend to excel. They display great stability. They prove more reliable, more loyal, more dependable than workers who are not mentally retarded.

All of which boils down to the fact that on certain types of jobs, the qualified mentally retarded are excellent workers. But they must be given equal opportunity for employment. How else can they show their good traits?

A VARIETY OF JOBS

During the past decade there has been a noticeable increase in the number and types of occupations the qualified mentally retarded are able to perform. These jobs have tended to pattern themselves in the major occupational areas listed below. The years 1954–57 are used because they represent the most reliable statistics available. The years since have seen an even greater spread of jobs.

Major Occupational Groupings for Rehabilitated Mentally Retarded Persons

(Based on 2,942 retarded persons vocationally rehabilitated through Federal-State programs, 1954-57)

Type of occupation	*Percentage*
Service workers	30.0
Unskilled workers	21.2
Semiskilled workers	19.3
Clerical, sales, kindred	12.0
Family workers, homemakers	6.2
Agricultural workers	5.9
Skilled employees	5.4

Within these occupational areas there has been a noticeable increase in the types of establishments and places of employment where the mentally retarded have found jobs. Among other places, the retarded are working in laundries, drycleaning establishments, restaurants, gas stations, barbershops, beauty parlors, hospitals, nursing homes, private homes, nurseries, publishing houses, retail stores, factories, and farms.

Over the years, the qualified mentally retarded have been successfully employed in the following jobs (as well as hundreds of others): general office clerks, messengers, officeboys, mail carriers, stock clerks, salesclerks, domestics, dayworkers, housekeepers, nursemaids, nurses' aides, attendants, ward helpers, busboys, kitchen helpers, dishwashers, bootblacks, manicurists, ushers, personal service workers, porters, janitors, sextons, attendants, recreation and amusement workers, farmhands, landscape laborers, groundsmen, bakers, upholsterers, construction workers, unskilled laborers, textile machine tenders, welders, routemen, packers, assemblers, inspectors, laundry sorters, filling station attendants, carpenters' helpers, metalworkers, warehousemen.

And the list grows and grows.

ing, provided by the more than 200 vocational rehabilitation agencies and sheltered workshops, which serve mentally retarded adults.

Many are sponsored by, or have some relationship with, the National Association for Retarded Children. In addition, many Goodwill Industries of America workshops and Jewish Vocational Service workshops take in the mentally retarded.

In a typical sheltered workshop, the retarded person is given a comprehensive vocational rehabilitation program of evaluation and training which takes about a year. He is exposed to a simulated work atmosphere. He is evaluated and trained by professional staff in a wide variety of work situations. Individual vocational analysis is made, and suitable preparation is given for competitive employment. The trainee is expected to learn the basic skills essential to work. He is given every opportunity to demonstrate his ability to use hand and machine tools. Eventually, he is able to develop tolerance for full-time employment.

Finally, the day comes. He is ready for work.

FINDING THE RIGHT WORKER

An employer relies on local employment resources which serve him well. When he receives good service, quick referrals, and qualified candidates, he continues to use the same tried-and-true recruitment sources for future job openings.

The local office of the State employment service or the local office of the State vocational rehabilitation agency fill many requests for qualified mentally retarded workers. But employers need not limit their search to these two agencies. There are other sources.

An analogy can be made with postcardiac or posttuberculosis patients seeking employment. Agency people aren't likely to send a cardiogram or chest X-ray to the employer. Instead, they will send a Physical Capabilities Analysis Form, together with other background information about the applicant. Technical terms like "cardiogram" or "pneumothorax" generally have little meaning to personnel officials. Such terms tend to stereotype the applicant or confuse the employer.

So it is with generic terms in mental retardation. "Mongolism," "exogenous retardation" or "brain injured retarded" mean little to the employer without functional explanations. Such terms should be translated into their significance regarding actual job requirements.

Far more is involved in successful job placement than an IQ score. Although there is a relationship between intelligence and job performance, extremely few jobs today call for an IQ score as a basic requirement. Rather, job requirements are more descriptive—such as "the work requires considerable judgment" or "the individual needs a high degree of initiative and imagination."

But we are not considering such factors in jobs for the mentally retarded. Instead, we are concerned with jobs calling for simple skills, few decisions, and repetitive and established routines. For the mentally retarded, we generally seek out jobs which might bore others; jobs which are dull or routine; jobs which demand only limited mental ability. These are the kinds of jobs in which the mentally retarded can excel.

And so, factors other than the IQ need to be considered—education, training, job experience, motivation, attitude, appearance, personality, and general health. The IQ score need not be completely ignored, but it should not be the sole condition by which the mentally retarded are to be judged.

A safer, more reasonable approach is to consider each individual's potentials, his good points, and his "plus" factors. It is the best way to assess the retarded worker's abilities and to match them with the job demands.

Some persons with relatively high IQ's may be unable to do the work as well as those with lower IQ's. There are circumstances in which two persons with the same IQ may differ as to ability to perform a job.

It all boils down to matching the individual with the specific job.

THE INTERVIEW

Some companies have special forms to be completed by job applicants—withholding tax forms, job application forms, employee record forms, and the like.

If the placement interviewer accompanies the job applicant for the first interview, he can be helpful in filling out the forms. Or perhaps he might obtain them in advance and fill them out in his office.

Some employers prefer that both the job applicant and his placement interviewer be present during the interview. The employer may feel more comfortable about asking questions. Also, he can then call the placement interviewer about any job adjustment problems which might arise in the future. Further, the presence of the placement interviewer or job counselor may help the applicant to be more at ease during the initial interview.

There is need to begin the job interview on the proper level of understanding by the mentally retarded applicant. This does not mean talking down to the applicant as though he were a child. Nor does it mean talking up to him, as though he were a candidate for an engineering position. The proper way is to speak directly, person to person, using terms which clearly describe or illustrate what needs to be done on the job. Speak as you would to someone in the upper levels of elementary school.

An illustration:

A mentally retarded worker had a job as porter in a small hotel. His work was satisfactory, but he never put his mop and pail away in the proper place. The employer probed and probed, and finally discovered why. The porter had been instructed to "put the mop and pail down after you clean the floor, then empty the waste cans." That one word, "down," was an abstract word; too abstract for him.

The solution: With chalk, the employer drew a circle on the floor. He told the porter, "put the mop and pail down here, on this spot."

There were no further problems.

Should the company have any restrictions on hiring the mentally retarded, it is at the initial interview that they can be modified most effectively.

There may be need to adopt a clear policy regarding employment of the retarded. Such a policy should make it known that available job openings shall be filled by the most qualified applicants—*including* the mentally retarded.

Further, the policy should state that the only judgment made of an individual's ability to perform on a job should be based on his skills, knowledge, aptitudes, abilities, training, and interests.

Finally, the policy should call for a periodic canvass of jobs in the plant or office which can be performed by qualified mentally retarded workers. When these jobs are open, the mentally retarded should be considered for them.

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Sociodrama for the Adolescent Mentally retarded[1]

A. Edward Blackhurst, Ph.D.

A primary objective of school programs for the mentally retarded is to provide experience that will enable them to achieve social and occupational adequacy at maturity. Yet, in surveying the research on social and occupational adjustment of the adult mentally retarded, Goldstein (1964) concluded that they are generally inferior to their normal peers. Although many are proficient in the skills required by their jobs, employment is often terminated because of their inability to successfully interact with the employer and other employees. Goldstein also pointed out that the occupational outlook for the retarded is not bright. He stated: "The number of jobs usually identified with the mentally retarded is on the decrease and ... competition for these jobs will become more keen (p. 251).

The implications which can be drawn from these conclusions are clear. Although special educators are apparently doing an adequate job in preparing the retarded for the mechanics of employment, there is a weakness in the preparation for social adjustment - both on and off the job. Also, since the employment outlook indicates that the retarded will be competing with normal workers for unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, educators must increase their efforts in preparing the mentally retarded for adulthood.

It is the thesis of this paper that sociodrama can be used to facilitate the acquisition of social concepts and skills. Basically, sociodrama, which is also called role playing of reality practice, is the acting out of a social situation with individuals assuming the roles of the participants involved" (Gronlund, 1959 p. 259).

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[1]Reprinted from Training School Bulletin, 1966, 63, 136-142.

The Warm-up

The first step involves the identification of the problem, description of the situation and roles to be played, and the selection of participants. The inclusion of the students in this initial stage brings the problem closer to their needs and increase their motivation.

The problem can evolve in several ways: From the pupil's experiences, from stories illustrating problems in interpersonal relationships, spontaneously from group discussions or classroom events, of it can be planned by the teacher. The importance of the problem should be indicated to the students so that they will become aware of their need to learn ways to solve it.

Eventually, the teacher should have certain well-defined goals for the sociodrama experience; however, it is wise to initially dramatize relatively simple problems that are suggested by the students. Since the students will have had experience with problems which they propose, they will be more spontaneous and less embarrassed than in the teacher-suggested sociodrama. A list of problems could be collected by asking the students for problems that a typical teenager might have. An example of this type of problem might be that a girl wants to wear make-up; but her parents think that she is too young.

. . . . . .

Next, students would be selected to dramatize the roles that were defined. This entire "warm-up" period should generate enough enthusiasm so that there will be no difficulty obtaining volunteers for the various roles.

The Sociodrama

The dramatization would then begin. (It is desirable to tape record the actual sociodrama for use as a reference in the discussion period.) The actual sociodrama is a spontaneous enactment of the students' interpretation of their roles. Behavior and conversation should flow freely fron the family experiences of the participants rather than through learned dialogue.

Prehaps the most difficult part of the entire process is getting the students to verbalize when sociodrama is first introduced -- particularly if they have experienced past difficulty with interpersonal relationships. Arnholter (1955) proposes the use of props to bridge this initial awkward period. She suggests constructing simple fist puppets by drawing faces on paper bags. Arnholter reports success with the mentally retarded using this technique. She attributes this to the puppet being a tangible symbol of the role, thus causing the student to feel less self conscious and enabling him to freely express his feelings.

Mistakes are expected; and the participants are not criticized if they occur. This rule applies to both the students and the teacher. Errors and role misinterpretations frequently stimulate discussions which often lead to constructive suggestions concerning ways to react in social situations. If the sociodrama loses spontaneity, the teacher may prompt -- but only to get the drama moving again, not to influence the solution of the problem. She might ask, "What does (name of role) say now?" The teacher should also realize that the roles may release inhibitions of polite classroom behavior and should not censor the portrayal of actual problems.

The Discussion

The most important step is the discussion following the actual sociodrama. Here, the students discuss and analyze the feelings, attitudes, and behaviors that seem most effective and ineffective in solving the problem. The solution to the problem, as displayed in the sociodrama, is discussed in detail and its consequences on social relations are considered. Any criticisms on the part of the teacher and the class should be directed to the role, not to the person playing it.

Understanding and Developing Vocational Needs of the Mentally Retarded

Jan Baxter,
Michigan Department of Education

Since we are concerned with health and related occupations. I would like to ask you to think of the last time you were sick.

You had the flu or you had to be hospitalized for an operation. Recall the feeling of being sick. Remember the inability to complete your ordinary chores and routines without a hard conscious effort. If your illness was serious enough you were dependent on others for such simple things as your food.

There are other times when we do not feel as ourselves. You know that funny, queasy feeling that you can't identify, perhaps the day before a cold starts or before you get the flu? You are not sick and you are not well. You know that there's something wrong, yet you can't put your finger on it. It's a darn frustrating feeling at best.

WHAT IS IT?

Mental retardation: What is it? What's it like? We start by deciding it is something like you felt the day before you had the cold. You were aware that something was not quite right, but you were not sure what it was. Your friends may have known you were a little different that day. You felt it, but you couldn't put your finger on on it and it was a pretty discouraging feeling. This is the way a moderately retarded person feels in most academic situations and oftentimes during a large part of his adolescence. He knows he is different, he can't read as well, he isn't as sharp in math and he doesn't know why. Most retarded persons have friends with whom they get along well. They may play sports and do fairly well. Most of these youngsters come from a different culture, perhaps the black culture, the Mexican culture or the environment of the poor. Socially their goals and desires are somewhat different than those of the majority of students in the school system. The other students know they are different, but they don't know why. But because they are different, they may decide to poke fun at them, or to ignore them. Some establish a relationship deeply and intensively enough to find out why they are different. Remember, just before you had the cold, the day before you got the flu, you weren't sure what was wrong, but you knew something was wrong.

Think about living with that feeling through your adolescence---two, four, six years of that queasy feeling, of being different and not knowing why. This is what it is like to be moderately retarded.

Mental retardation is not a thing. It does not exist of itself. It always exists as a part of an individual, of a human being, and therefore there is no one definition of mental retardation. Each of the two million affected individuals in this country has a different type of retardation.

FIVE Q'S

The first thing that generally comes to mind when we think of retardation is I.Q.--Intelligence Quotient. The I.Q. is a measurement device that compares tested intellectual age over chronological age and thus gives us a quotient. The tested intellectual age is measured on a tool that was primarily designed to measure academic competency. The primary use of the intelligence quotient is to give us some emperical knowledge of an individual's ability to learn. We know that people learn differently and at varying rates in different phases of development. Individuals hit spurts of learning so that even if we know how fast somebody learns, it does not tell us how much he will learn in any one period of time. Therefore, the intelligence quotient is helpful as a general tool, but the quantity measure which it yields is not readily convertable to the quality of learning that takes place over any day, or week, or month, or year. It is a guide, but it does not help us understand mental retardation.

Most of us are not familiar with the other four quotients.

Yes, there are five areas with which one must be familiar to understand the mentally retarded. The second one is the P.D.Q. or Physical Development Quotient. We have all developed physically somewhat differently from others. Some are tall, some are short; some are right-handed, some are lefthanded. Some are graceful and some tend to be, as my father used to say, "doppy." The observation of little children in their growth over a year or two years makes one very aware of the Physical Development Quotient.

There are two other quotients which are very seldom mentioned, but which are very important in terms of the overall understanding of the mentally retarded and their vocational potential. The first I.Q. that is overlooked are 'Innate Quirks.' Everybody has them. It may be a tick, like scratching the head, or adjusting glasses. It may be a verbal tone. Many of these are learned behavior. An innate quirk can often be eliminated, although it may be difficult to change these behavioral patterns that have existed for years.

The last and most important I.Q., the one which is most often a direct result of the successful placement of the mentally retarded and the one which has been the most difficult to classify is the 'Innate Qualities.' Innate Qualities include that personal drive and motivation, the

friendly smile and the desire to work.

PEOPLE

My first philosophical statement dealing with all this is that there is no such thing as mental retardation. It is not a thing--there are only people. People with low I.Q's may be socially competent, they may have terrific innate qualities, a few quirks, and perhaps some physical adaptation problems. But each one is different, an individual. In the development of a vocational education program for the mentally retarded, you must develop a program to meet needs of individuals. This does not mean that the individuals do not have some commonality due to their I.Q.'s in the way they learn. They may learn more slowly, they may not accummulate as many facts and may need adapted instructional methods because of some perceptual problem. They are individuals and there is no categorical statement that will honestly and truly relate to each one.

There are certain degrees of mental retardation: mild, moderate, severe, profound. As the degree of mental retardation becomes more severe, the five Q's become more noticeably depressed. The moderately retarded individual may have a somewhat low Intelligence Quotient, but if he has few innate quirks, many personal qualities, is socially competent and physically attractive, he will not only become successful in society, but may, perhaps, become a leader. This is the type of individual whom you may train to be a nurses' aide and, five years later, you find as a supervisor. This is the individual who may start out washing test tubes in a laboratory and end up as a lab technician. It may take them five times longer, but if they have the personal motivation and everything else going for them, their disability in learning academic skills will be overcome.

My second point of philosophy is very simple and I will quote from Jerome Bruner, the famous Harvard psychologist, the author of *The Process of Education:* **"Any subject can be taught effectively in an intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development."**

This is an awesome statement. Basically it says that we can teach any individual, including the mentally retarded, anything, if, of course, he is interested and wants to learn it. If he has reached a level of development, or if we have brought him to the level of development where he is able to comprehend the knowledge we are presenting and if we present it in the right way. All the challenges in this statement are challenges to the educator and not to the student. Thirty years ago no one would have believed that we could teach algebra or geometry to elementary students. Today we are doing it. We are teaching it in the first grade and the second grade all because some educators took Dr. Bruner's statement at face value, believed it, and proceeded in accordance with their belief.

ATTITUDE

The attitude that goes along with this is a simple one: As an educator, I am responsible for providing the sequential learning so that students can comprehend it. **If the student is not learning, he has not been properly prepared, and that I must do, or I am not providing the material appropriately, or, finally, I am not providing enough time for the student to assimulate the material.**

The third concept I would like to discuss is a philosophy of learning. In *The Absorbent Mind*, Dr. Maria Montessori notes that without ever being taught, French children learn French, Russian children learn Russian, and American children learn English. She writes, "For us it is very difficult to conceive of an infant's mental power, but there can be no doubt how privileged it is. How wonderful it would be if we could retain the prodigious capacity we had as children, of romping happily, jumping and playing while learning at the same time the whole of a new language in all of its intimacy. How marvelous if all knowledge came in our mind simply as a result of living without any need for more effort than is required to eat or breathe. At first we should notice no particular change, then, suddenly the things we had learned would all appear in our minds, like shining stars of knowledge; we would begin to realize that they were there, become conscious of ideas that had unwittingly become ours. Human learning is a great thing, to be aware of our knowledge, to have the human form of mind, but we have to pay for this, for no sooner do we become conscious that every fresh piece of knowledge costs us effort and hard work.

There has been very little research into how these whom we call the retarded learn. At what stage of development do they stop learning through absorbtion from their environment and make the transition to conscious learning? We know that in normal children this begins somewhere around five, and by the time a normal child enters first grade, the process of learning through conscious effort is becoming well established. Mental retardation refers to sub-average general intellectual functioning which originates during the developmental period and is associated with impairment in adaptive behavior. This impairment in adaptive behavior is most often codified in terms of the ability to learn academic skills, the ability to learn where conscious effort is needed.

STRUCTURE

Studies in the vocational education of the mentally retarded have shown that time and time again they can learn skills in on-the-job-training situations that they have previously not learned in the traditional academic setting. This phenomenon has been observed to such an extent that special educators often make two assumptions about the mentally retarded in providing vocational instruction to them during their secondary school program.

The first assumption is that mental retardates cannot learn through didactic measures. They cannot learn from formal education. At first glance, this theory would seem to be consistent with the definition of mental retardation and with Montessori's findings. We should then structure most of our learning so students could absorb the knowledge they need in situations like on-the-job-training.

This is what is happening in most of our secondary special education programs. Students, from 13 to 16 years old, are placed in work experience programs either in school or out of the school. In most special education programs, from the age of thirteen on there is little formal didactic education experience provided to the retarded. This has a direct bearing to the approach taken in establishing a vocational education program in health occupation areas for the mentally retarded. Montessori showed that pre-school children can learn by didactic methods. However these methods of teaching were not the traditional educational approaches. They required structuring the environment so that the students could learn. Ordering and sequencing became the key factors developing materials in Bruner's intellectually honest manner. We in special education have not broken down the material in an intellectually honest form to components that students who have low reading ability can easily absorb. We have not manipulated the environment.

There have been a number of experiments using teaching machines for the mentally retarded. It was found that they could successfully learn with these devices when the material was presented appropriately. The mentally retarded can learn through didactic methods, but it becomes the teacher's responsibility to adjust the environment so that they can easily absorb what is being presented.

EFFORT

At the age of fourteen or fifteen, the mildly mentally retarded have made the transition from learning through absorbtion to learning through conscious effort. **The key, the secret to my philosophy of learning is that we must structure the environment to make learning easier for them, to help them absorb as much as they can so that we can reduce the amount of conscious hard work that is needed.** Vocational educators have traditionally used this method. They have taught a unit and then have allowed the students to practice it. For example, we teach the students the different types of thermometers and how to read them; we teach them medical implications of the temperatures. Then we let the students take a temperature. The only difference in terms of working with the mentally retarded is to break the learning sequence up so that the learning is easier to comprehend. In a class of nursing students, it might be acceptable for the teacher to use one thermometer and to demonstrate to the class. In a class of mentally handicapped youngsters, it is much more acceptable to let each student have a thermometer while you are explaining it. Be sure that each student can identify the different parts and knows how to turn the thermometer so that she can find the mercury and read the temperature. Each student should practice with the thermometer on another student two or three times.

PLACEMENT

The second assumption that is often made about the retarded is that they are ready to work at age fourteen and certainly by age sixteen. This is reflected by the almost exclusive use of the work study program for the junior and senior year of the mentally retarded. Many special educators advocate the placement of the retarded in a minimum of half time in a work study program during their junior year, and many systems permit the full time placement of the mentally handicapped in employment during their senior year. A few require this for graduation.

Let us consider the efficacy of this type of programming. We said the mentally retarded have a subaverage general intellectual functioning which is associated with impairment of adaptive behaviors. If this be true, then we should not place the retarded in employment at the same or earlier age as we place their normal peers. We should certainly never place them in employment without providing them with pre-requisite academic skills, yet this happens in many of our special education programs. There is a direct relationship between the degree of retardation and the student's ability to succeed in this type of situation.

REMAIN

In discussing the five Q's, I noted that individuals are classified into degrees of retardation. Problems tend to show up in each of the different areas. There is a direct relationship between the I.Q. and P.Q., or physical quotient. That is, the lower the I.Q., the greater the chances of a secondary physical deficit or neurological impairment. For example, there are more multiply handicapped individuals with I.Q.'s of 50 than there are at 70. The number of perceptual handicaps in individuals with I.Q.'s in the 60's are significantly greater than those with I.Q.'s in the 70's or 80's.

Researchers have noticed larger numbers of social problems with the more severely retarded than with the mildly retarded, which interfere with their ability to adjust to community employment. The social I.Q. is related to a slow maturation of the "social sense." The student has not developed from a self-centered, or ego-centric personality, to a socially centered or altruistic personality. If a student has not developed an awareness of others to the extent of sixteen or seventeen year old peers, it is detrimental to place him in an on-the-job training or work study program. **These students need to remain in the controlled environment of the**

school where they can be allowed to mature physically and mentally, where they can be provided sufficient sequential vocational instruction so that they have the requisite skills for job entry, and where their innate quirks can be modified to where they are acceptable to the employer. This has not been the traditional approach in the vocational training of the mentally retarded. There will be substantial pressure on you to make maximum utilization of on-the-job training in community employment stations. I urge you to consider, prior to placing any student in the community, his readiness vocationally in terms of pre-requisite skills, socially in terms of his ability to be concerned about others, physically in terms of his development of skills and ability to compensate for secondary physical problems, especially perceptual problems, and his innate quirks.

MOTIVATION

The last area I would like to consider is that of individual motivation and the personal factors in career choice. There is an old philosophical saying which goes, "One cannot love what one does not know," and so one cannot want what one does not know. One of the challenges is to motivate students, to make them want to be successful in a health occupations field. Reflect, if you will, on your own past experiences. Why did you go into education or health occupations as a career? Was it because someone you liked and respected was involved in a job in your career field and you wanted to emulate him?

Motivation can be stimulated by vocational status. We know there is respect for doctors. This is a status position. But there cannot be doctors without the many others in the health fields along the base of a support pyramid.

You will have a threefold challenge in meeting the vocational education needs of the mentally retarded to prepare them for the health occupations. The first will be to provide the general knowledge needed for success. Second, you must inspire them, motivate them to want to enter the field, and finally, you must instill the dignity of the job for which they will be responsible in helping to care for the sick.

Once you have implemented your vocational program in health sciences for the mentally retarded, it will be up to you to influence high school and junior high school teachers to provide the students with pre-requisite skills for entry into your program. You might be the individual who is instrumental in developing more appropriate occupational information and instruction to upgrade the pre-requisite skills and which in turn will enable you to upgrade your programs.

The junior high school years are used to teach skills that are useful to the students. During this time, for example, we teach first aid. In general health sciences, which deal with body functions, basic biology, and so on, there are any number of movies and science models that can be used for the mentally handicapped. First aid will be handy to the student regardless of his career. Some special educator might argue that learning the parts of the body is a waste of time for the mentally retarded. I maintain that we have no better demands on the time of these youngsters. This type of knowledge adds to the social prestige of these students by enabling them to converse with parents, doctors and others in acceptable language. Many of these youngsters are embarrassed when they do not know the proper biological terms in discussing medical problems with their physicians. More important for our purposes, this has vocational implications. To be a cosmetologist or a barber, or to work in the health occupations, one must know anatomy.

BEYOND

Finally, I urge you to evaluate your students when you know there is potential for the student to go beyond what you have to offer, to make arrangements for him to obtain adjusted training through some other source. A large per cent of all the youngsters who are given the stigma of mental retardation are mildly impaired. Many of them suffer from cultural or social deprivation and are not truly retarded. They suffer from lack of educational opportunities. Many of them, if provided an opportunity, might be able to become practical nurses and there are a few who may become nurses or even doctors. Although the latter is extremely rare, it is the vocational education teachers' responsibility to know the potential in their students and to help these students find appropriate training beyond that for which the teacher is presently responsible.

PART VI

Job-Simulation Centers and Areas of Skill Training

The work-study program for educable mentally retarded students should provide the personnel, resources, facilities, materials, and equipment for students to have opportunities to develop the skills required for job placement in the community. The schematic drawings in Part VI suggest job-cluster areas (1) that can be developed in the work-study program in the school; and (2) that can be extended toward providing training for specific jobs located in the community.

Figure 1 shows seven suggested job-simulated training centers that can be developed within the total school operation. This example, and the subsequent ones as well, can be used in the work-study program as a training focus directed toward providing facilities for developing skills relative to occupations available within the community. Persons responsible for administering the programs will need to (1) study the employment opportunities within the community; and (2) establish training programs to develop the necessary skills required by the agencies and businesses for successful job performance. All the job-simulated centers should be identified and developed on the basis of the students' needs and the availability of job opportunities.

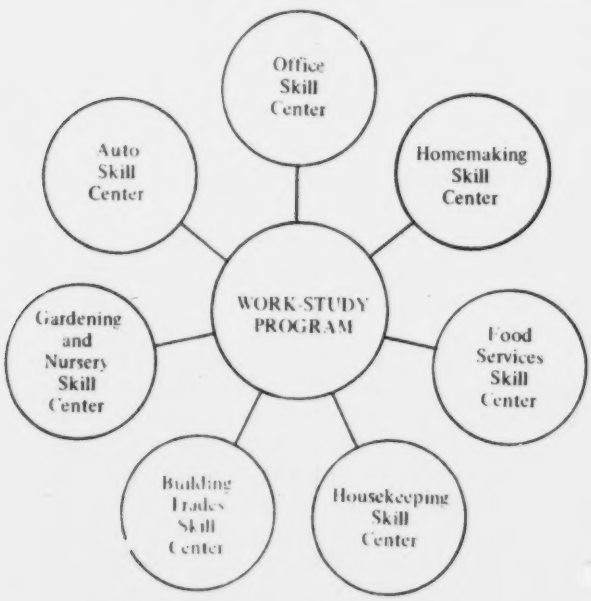

Figure 1. General Job-Simulation Centers

Following the selection of needed skill-training centers, a careful analysis of the specific skills required for satisfactory performance must be made. The term "center" does not imply a separate facility, building, or shop; rather, it refers to a focal point for planning and coordinating a function. It also refers to a general area of training within which many specific skills can be developed to lead to many different job classifications, titles, and job placements. For example, Figure 2 shows that one center can be broken down into many components that are all related and yet different in the final outcome. From the office skill center, specific training can be provided to prepare students to become duplicating machine operators and helpers, messengers, stockroom clerks, clerks, typists, switchboard operators, and many more types of employees. The specific training would be given in the typing room for typists, in the stockroom for stockroom clerks, in the total building for messengers, in the duplicating room for machine operators, and so on. Figure 2 suggests related training opportunities that can revolve around the office skill center.

Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 provide suggestions for identifying the specialized skills, knowledges, and techniques necessary to perform specific jobs

within a large job classification. The identification of these specialized skills is the result of a detailed task analysis of the job requirements.

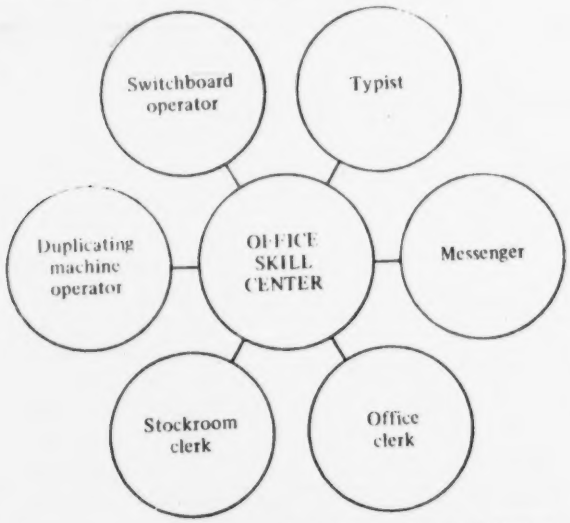

Figure 2. Training Areas – Specific Office Skill Center

Figure 3 contains a few suggestions regarding the specialized skills, knowledges, and techniques that one needs for successful performance as a typist. Of course, none of these should be interpreted to be totally inclusive or exclusive. Figure 4 identifies some of the specialized skills, knowledges, and techniques that will be necessary to perform satisfactorily as a messenger; Figure 5, as an office clerk; Figure 6, as a stockroom clerk; Figure 7, as a duplicating machine operator, and Figure 8, as a switchboard operator.

Diagrams for other centers of related jobs, as well as the breakdown of the skill components, are set forth in Appendix G.

Figure 9 provides suggestions and shows the steps necessary in determining a specialized job-task analysis. This is presented as an example that should be used for each of the job titles contained in the total job-training program. The position of typist has been selected for this example. The specific task is defined as typing an original letter from a written manuscript.

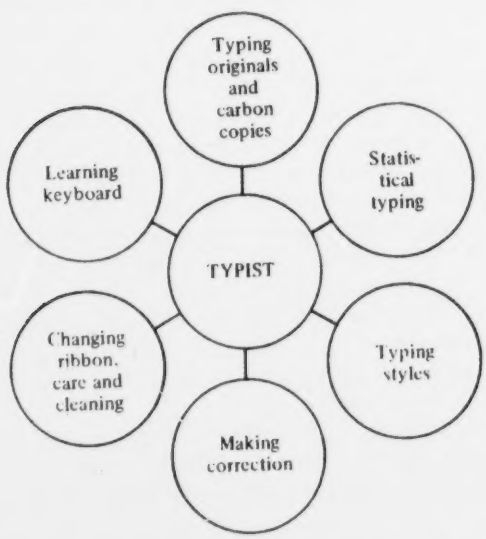

Figure 3. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Typist

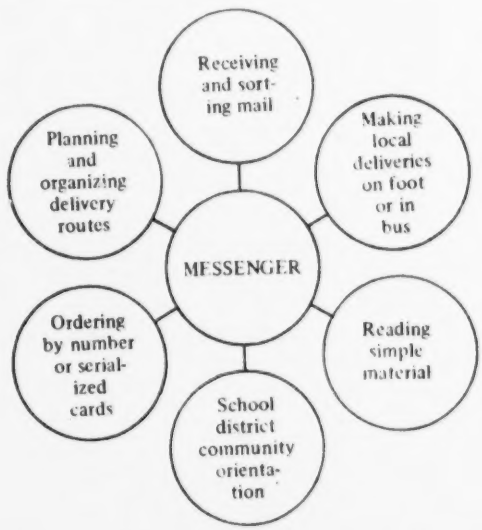
Receiving and sorting mail
Planning and organizing delivery routes
Making local deliveries on foot or in bus
MESSENGER
Ordering by number or serialized cards
Reading simple material
School district community orientation

Figure 4. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Messenger

In column 1 the specific subtasks are listed; these must be performed in sequence in order to produce the finished letter. The specific action for each subtask is stated. Column 2 defines the type of performance required for the subtask, and column 3 records the level of difficulty of the subtask performance requirement. Measurement and evaluation, upon successful completion of the subtask, are inherent in the subtask itself. For example, the first sequential subtask in typing the original letter is to select the type of paper to be used for the letter. If the paper is selected correctly, the subtask has been performed. If an incorrect selection is made, the subtask has not been performed, and progress to the second subtask cannot proceed. Failure on any step may indicate that additional training is needed. The

process proceeds from subtask 1 through subtask 10 until the total task is completed.

Again, a job-task analysis breakdown form should be made in connection with each task. Once these forms are available, the student knows specifically what is required of him, the teacher or job trainer knows what must be taught; and both know when the goal has been achieved and to what level of success. Also, the administrators know whether the program is meeting the needs and requirements both of the program and of the students in terms of measurable outcomes.

Figure 10 shows the functional organization in which the student can progress from initial evaluation for vocational potential through vocational exploration, through skill training, and into the mainstream of placement in the world of work. For example, a student in the work-study program who had demonstrated interests and capabilities in the general field of office skills would be referred to the "office skill center" function of the work-study program; this function is shown as the hub of the drawing.

Once in the program for this center, the student would receive additional vocational evaluation to determine the specific direction in which his interests and capabilities should be guided. The student and the staff would then establish a vocational exploration plan that would permit that boy or girl to gain on-the-job experiences in several different skill positions all related to general office skills. In Figure 10 these suggested related skill positions are shown in the first ring of circles expanded from the skill center.

Once a specific position (job title) has been identified as compatible with the interests and abilities of the student and reinforced by exploratory vocational experience, a vocational training plan is prepared, and the specific skill requirements for successful functioning are also identified. Joint effort and cooperation of the staff, the student, and the parents and/or the guardian must be involved in this process. At this point it would likely be feasible to start specific training, which would ultimately result in continued on-the-job training and/or placement in a community-based and community-operated facility. Some examples of community-based facilities in this last phase of training and/or placement are shown in the outer ring of circles in Figure 10.

Figure 5. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Office Clerk

Figure 6. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Stockroom Clerk

Putting stencil on drum
Setting automatic counter
Checking fluid and turning on machine
DUPLI-CATING MACHINE OPERATOR
Stacking multipage jobs
Check-ing rol-ler pressure and putting in paper
Dropping feeder level

Figure 7. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Duplicating Machine Operator

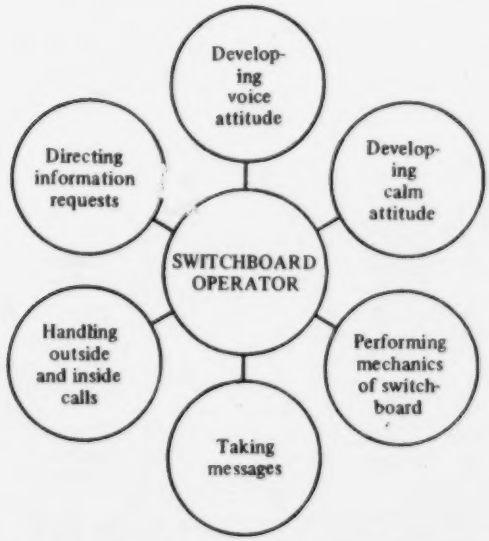

Figure 8. Specific Areas of Skill Training – Switchboard Operator

BREAKDOWN OF JOB-TASK ANALYSIS

POSITION TYPIST

TASK Typing an original letter from the written manuscript

REQUIREMENTS Knowledge of typewriter, ability to type

No.	Steps in task performance	Performance required	Performance difficulty
1.	Select type of paper to be used.	Discrimination	Easy
2.	Roll paper in machine.	Manipulation	
3.	Set margins.	Manipulation	Moderately difficult
4.	Roll up paper.	Manipulation	Easy
5.	Typing		
	a. Date on letter	Copying	Moderate to very difficult
	b. Inside address		
	c. Salutation		
	d. Body of letter		
	e. Closing		
	f. cc note		
6.	Proofread letter.	Discrimination	Moderate to very difficult
7.	Roll out paper.	Manipulation	Easy
8.	Have letter signed.	Presentation	Easy
9.	Type envelope.	Manipulation or copying	Moderate to difficult
10.	Put stamp on envelope.	Manipulation	Easy

Figure 9. Breakdown of Job-Task Analysis

Each job should be broken down into its required tasks, and each task should be broken down in sequence such as the example set forth here. This format provides the basis for training, performance, and evaluation.

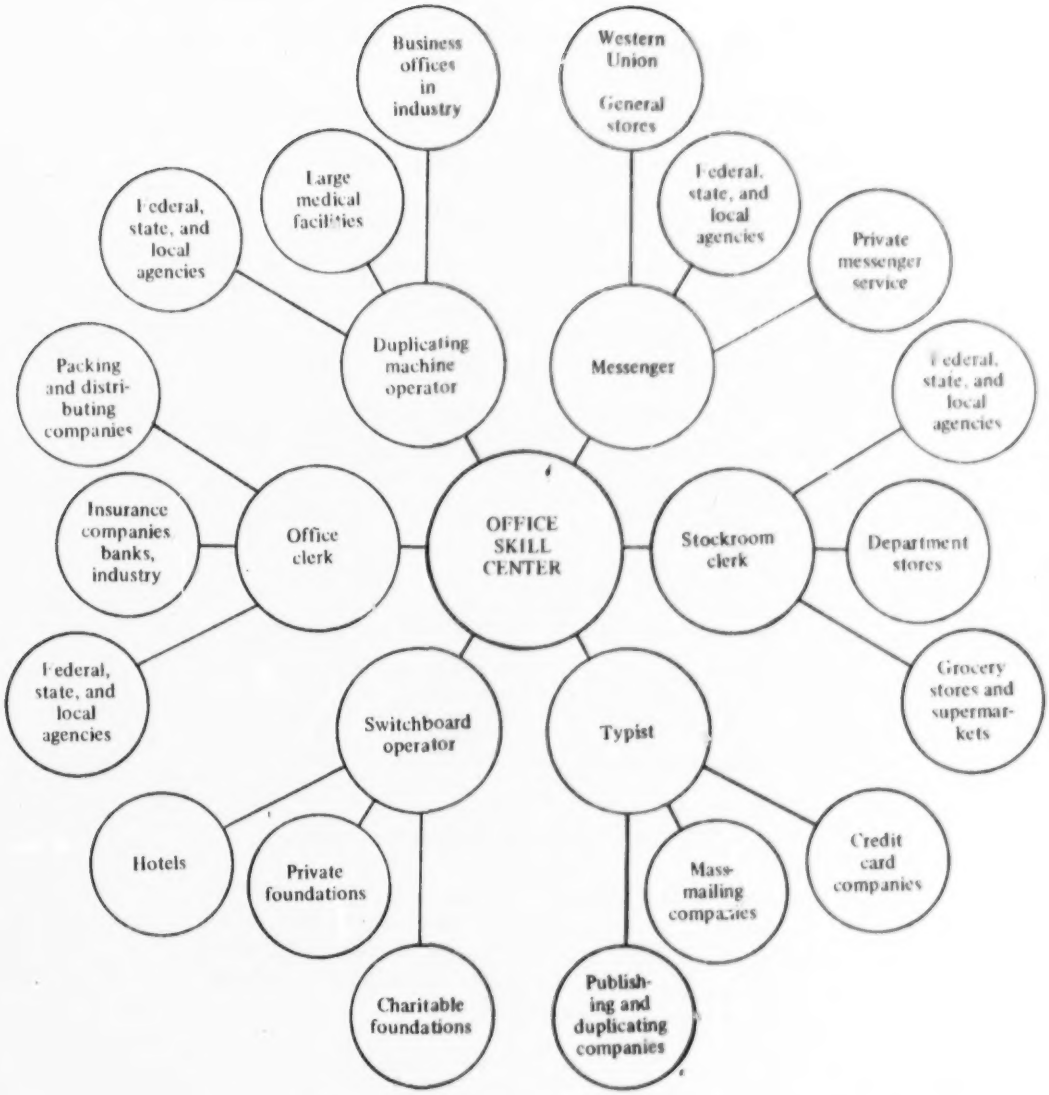

Figure 10. The End Goal: Community Jobs

Reynolds, M. Leroy. "Questions That May Be Asked," A Project To Train Vocational Education and Special Education Teachers to Work Cooperatively in Occupational Preparation of Handicapped Persons.

QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ASKED

Who will be the primary target?

An individual who has a mental, physical and or emotional impairment, which limits his educational program, is considered educationally handicapped. Any condition that tags a student as vocationally handicapped makes that student a target of the project's concern.

Who will use this material?

The material contained in this package (handbook plus one or more of the cluster guides) is designed to be used by vocational education teachers and special education teachers working cooperatively in the occupational training of the handicapped person.

Who is a handicapped person?

A handicapped person is one who because of a physical and or psychological condition (disability) requires an educational program designed to minimize the effect of his disability so that he can make an adequate personal, social, and vocational adjustment to society.

Is there a difference between handicap and disability?

Handicap and disability are frequently used interchangeably. However, for our purpose disability refers to medical and or psychological descriptions of an individual's problem. For example, because of Rubella, a person may be born blind and therefore disabled. The extent to which blindness continues to interfere with a person's personal, social, and vocational adequacy he may be considered to be handicapped. In other words, all handicapped persons are disabled but not all disabled persons are handicapped. If during the development period a blind child receives special educational services, and as a young adult he is allowed to participate in an appropriate occupational preparation program, his "handicap", as defined here, diminishes.

What makes it difficult for the handicapped to succeed?

Contrary to popular belief, it is not the disability itself. There is much evidence to suggest that many persons have overcome problems caused by disabilities and they do lead useful and productive lives. The primary difficulty seems to be the attitude of people who are reluctant to accept persons who are different. Often this reluctance is nothing more than an over cautious response to a first impression and does not necessarily indicate intolerance or a lack of concern.

What adaptations must be made to successfully absorb this child in the vocational education classes?

It would be impossible to list all the adaptations that a teacher may make in adjusting the occupational program to meet the needs of the disabled child. It might be as simple as adjusting

the height of the working area or as complicated as cooperatively designing individual activities to meet the needs of a potentially capable student having limited muscular control. These creative adaptations could lead a youngster to successful employment

How does a teacher know when he is having success with a student?

One recognizes success by continuous observations, conscientious evaluation and by keeping adequate records. Depending on the child's problems, a system of evaluation should require the input of both the special education and vocational education teacher. One recommended type of record that documents changes in a student's progress is a dated daily log indicating changes in attitude and/or ability. Any indication of regression should cause one to immediately reassess the learning activities program and decide whether or not it is contributing to the solution or to the problem. A skilled teacher making allowances for handicapped students will eventually expect the individual to meet reasonable standards.

Can the amount of time spent making these adjustments be justified?

From the point of view of both the student and the teacher, the answer should be an unqualified "yes".

How?

The teacher sensitizes himself to meet the individual needs of children by constantly utilizing and searching for appropriate materials, methods, and curricula. These tools of education serve as sources of educational supply rather than defining the limits of the program.

The student benefits because the learning experiences have been adjusted to develop his particular potential and thereby increase his self sufficiency.

Why vocational education teachers?

Vocational education teachers have shown that they can constructively contribute to the occupational preparation of the handicapped child. This success has convinced educators that more could be accomplished if additional support and cooperation were provided.

What kind of handicapping conditions is the vocational education teacher likely to encounter?

The vocational teacher will work with the handicapped child whose disability has prevented him from successfully participating in an occupational training program.

What disabilities cause these students to be placed in special education facilities?

Traditionally we have identified these children by their medical and/or psychological description; mentally retarded, emotionally disturbed, blind or visually handicapped, deaf or hard of hearing, crippled or otherwise health impaired.

What's wrong with this traditional grouping?

Basically the traditional grouping, that of placing all children with the same medical and/or psychological disability in one room, has too little educational relevancy. The learning problems in that room could be so varied that there would be little similarity in the teaching technique required to develop each child's potential. In addition such labels tend to exert too much influence on the teacher's classroom decisions.

Do these children have common problems?

Yes, but too often these common problems have been their common medically described problem and has served only as an excuse for not meeting their individual educational needs. In other words, it has been the reason for not teaching rather than our reason for looking more closely at their individual educational needs.

What can we do to better serve these children?

We must approach their problems by evaluations that describe their educational needs. As these educational gaps are identified, materials and techniques can be adapted or developed. It is the student's educational handicaps that the teacher is prepared to minimize.

What is being done to change this approach?

In the last decade concentrated effort has gone into discovering learning patterns. Mental development has a parallel in physical development. It is as essential to take these mental steps sequentially as it is necessary for a child to walk before he runs.

What kind of help can the vocational education teacher expect?

Each child is an individual and as such will need a professional team concerned with his particular problems. For instance, if the child has a hearing disability, it follows that a teacher trained to teach the deaf will be invaluable in helping the teacher set up the occupational instruction program. The vocational teacher may need to understand the limitations of the hearing aid, at this point a technician whose special area of concern is the proper choice and use of hearing aids, would be consulted. Because of the hearing problem there may be need for some help in setting up adequate communication. It is possible that a speech therapist can be of assistance, — and so it goes. It is hoped that there will be professional assistance for each identified need.

What do we hope to accomplish with the individual?

Our focus is on the child who is occupationally handicapped. The ultimate aim is to have each handicapped individual accept what he must of his disability, adjust to its limitations, and develop those remaining abilities to the level where he is independently secure in a community that respects and needs him.

How does the Special Education teacher fit into the Vocational program?

a) The special education teacher will assist the vocational teacher in planning the adaptations of methods and materials to be used in the occupational training of the handicapped.

b) The special education teacher will also reinforce the vocational teacher's program by parallel teaching supportive information and activities that supplement the knowledges and skills being developed by the vocational education teacher.

Who will provide the opportunity for this kind of planning?

Schools already interested in students who are educationally and occupationally handicapped will be provided assistance through Federal and State funding. This will provide for an expanded program carefully evaluated so that this opportunity for occupational training can be available to all students.

How does this change the special education program?

It is predictable that this opportunity for occupational training will result in the student becoming motivated to the point of wanting to continue the vocational training program until he has attained, at least, a job-entry skill. This means that the special education program is changed only in its degree of interest, scope and direction.

What materials will be available to help the special education teacher understand the vocational education teacher's responsibilities?

Materials are currently being developed which will be available for the 1974-75 school year. These include instructional units developed within ten clusters including: Construction, Manufacturing, Food Preparation and Service, Clothing and Textile Services, Agriculture / Natural Resources, Distribution, Health Occupations, Automotive and Power Services, Office and Business Occupations, and Graphics and Communication Media.

Will the special education teacher be able to understand the tasks and their accompanying technical terms?

The tasks are defined by terms most common to the public; however, a column on the task sheet is specifically designed to relate definite competencies to the task being taught.

What will be the eventual outcome of this project?

It is hoped that the needs of all children will be more adequately met; however, more specifically it is predicted that the vocationally handicapped child will have occupational training and job opportunities seldom available before this project.